

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 FBO-02 A-01 AID-05 FAA-00 DOTE-00

EB-07 L-03 OC-05 CCO-00 AGR-05 /047 W

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P R 051722Z AUG 75

FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 545

INFO USIA WASHDC

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: AFSP, PFOR, NI

SUBJECT: FMG REQUISITION OF EMBASSY ANNEX

AF/W FOR AMBASSADOR EASUM

USIA/IAA FOR DAWSON

BRUSSELS FOR FAA

PASS AID, FAA, FAS/USDA

REF: STATE 177060, LAGOS 7111

1. SUMMARY: AUGUST 5, MEA PROTOCOL OFFICER URGENTLY REQUESTED STATUS REPORT ON AID MOVE. CHARGE GAVE HIM STATUS AND THEN BROUGHT UP ISSUE OF RENT-FREE OCCUPANCY OF OKOTIE-EBOH. MGBOKWERE TRIED TO FINESSE, BUT CHARGE REMINDED HIM THIS HAD BEEN ENVISIONED IN IYALLA/EASUM AGREEMENT AS THE QUID FOR U.S. ACCEPTANCE OF EXPENSE OF MOVE; DEAL WOULD BE UNFAIRLY ONE-SIDED WITHOUT SOME GIVE ON PART OF FMG. MGBOKWERE SAID HE WOULD REPORT CHARGE'S ARGUMENTS TO PERMSEC IYALLA. EMBASSY WILL MAINTAIN POSTURE OF FORWARD MOVEMENT ON SHIFT OF AID OFFICES AND PLANS PURSUE RENT-FREE ISSUE FURTHER AS SOON AS NEW EXTAFF COMMISSIONER IS NAMED.

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END SUMMARY.

2. AUGUST 5 AT 1:00 P.M., MEA PROTOCOL OFFICER MGBOKWERE CAME TO EMBASSY TO SEE CHARGE, AS HE HAD BEEN UNABLE GET THROUGH BY PHONE BECAUSE OF CITY-WIDE TELEPHONE BREAKDOWN DURING PAST SEVERAL DAYS. CHARGE WAS UNFORTUNATELY OUT, BUT MGBOKWERE TOLD SECRETARY HE URGENTLY NEEDED REPORT ON STATUS OF AID MOVE FROM EMBASSY ANNEX. ON RETURNING, CHARGE WALKED TO MEA (TRAFFIC COMPLETELY TIED UP), FOUND MGBOKWERE IN, AND AT HIS REQUEST REPORTED ON PROGRESS OF MOVE: TENTH FLOOR MOLONEY VACANT EXCEPT FOR CAFETERIA, AID AGRICULTURE DIVISION MOVED TO ELSIE FEMI PEARSE JULY 31, CONTROLLERS OFGICE AUGUST 4, C&R SCHEDULED TO MOVE AUGUST 7, WITH PROGRAM OFFICE TO FOLLOW. MGBOKWERE SAID HE HAD BEEN ASKED FOR STATUS REPORT TODAY AND MIGHT STILL BE ABLE TO MAKE IT. SAID HE WOULD REPORT THAT ROUGHLY TWO AND A HALF FLOORS WOULD BE VACATED BY WEEKEND, AND THIS SIGN OF SUBSTANTIAL MOVEMENT WOULD HELP.

3. CHARGE THEN ASKED: WHAT OF THE OTHER HALF OF THE EASUM/IYALLA BARGAIN? MGBOKWERE SAID DEPUTY PERMSEC DOVE-EDWIN HAD REPORTED HIS AUGUST 1 CONVERSATION WITH CHARGE (LAGOS 7385 NOTAL) AND HE, MGBOKWERE, SUPPORTED THE IDEA THAT U.S. SHOULD SIMPLY MOVE, AS FMG MAY NEVER RAISE QUESTION OF RENT AT ALL. CHARGE RESPONDED THAT "MAY" WAS NOT MUCH ASSURANCE, AND HE REITERATED THAT AMBASSADOR EASUM HAD OFFERED TO SEEK U.S. G. AGREEMENT TO BEAR THE COST OF MOVE IF FMG WOULD AGREE TO RENT-FREE OCCUPANCY OF OKOTIE-EBOH. WHAT MGBOKWERE WAS SUGGESTING WAS THAT WE CARRY OUT OUR PART OF THE BARGAIN AND HOPE FOR THE BEST ON THE REST. MGBOKWERE POINTED OUT THAT CIRCUMSTANCES

HADCHANGED AND BRIGADIER OBASANJO, WHO WAS PERSONALLY INTERESTED IN THE MATTER BEFORE, IS NOW IN MUCH MORE POWERFUL POSITION. CHARGE SAID HE WAS KEENLY AWARE OF THIS, BUT AS HE HAD SAID IN THE MEETING WITH OBASANJO JUNE 14 (LAGOS 5582) WE WERE ONLY ASKING THAT FMG BE FAIR IN THE MATTER. THEY WERE IN EFFECT EVICTING US FROM MOLONEY STREET; IF WE WERE TO BEAR THE COST OF THIS IN ADDITION TO THE INCONVENIENCE, IT SEEMED ONLY FAIR THAT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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WE NOT REPEAT NOT BE ASKED TO PAY RENT ON OKOTIE-EBOH PROPERTY.

4. MGBOKWERE THEN SAID PERMSEC IYALLA HAD BEEN WORKING ON "THE GOVERNMENT" BEFORE HIS DEPARTURE FOR KAMPALA AND WAS BRINGING IT AROUND TOWARD AGREEMENT ON THIS POINT. NOW, IYALLA HAD RETURNED FROM KAMPALA ONLY SATURDAY AND YESTERDAY WAS HIS FIRST DAY IN THE OFFICE. IYALLA

HAD THEREFORE ONLY JUST BEGUN TO MAKE HIS CONTACTS WITH NEW GOVERNMENT. CHARGE ASKED IF HE COULD SEE IYALLA TO DISCUSS THE PROBLEM. MGBOKWERE SAID IYALLA WAS TOO HEAVILY BOOKED, BUT HE PROMISED TO INFORM IYALLA OF CHARGE'S STRONG APPEAL ON RENT-FREE ISSUE.

5. IN RESPONSE TO QUESTION, MGBOKWERE SAID NEW COMMISSIONERS SHOULD BE ANNOUNCED VERY SOON, POSSIBLY THIS EVENING, BUT HE WOULD OFFER NO FURTHER INFORMATION OR SPECULATION.

6. COMMENT: MGBOKWERE WAS VERY FRIENDLY THROUGHOUT, WAS CLEARLY UNDER THE GUN FOR STATUS REPORT AND WAS OBVIOUSLY GRATIFIED AT CHARGE'S QUICK RETURN OF HIS VISIT AND AT HAVING SOMETHING CONCRETE TO REPORT IN THE WAY OF AID MOVEMENT FROM MOLONEY ANNEX.

7. WE DO NOT ATTACH PARTICULAR SIGNIFICANCE TO IYALLA'S STILL BEING ABOARD AS PERMSEC, AS IT WOULD BE NORMAL FOR HIS REPLACEMENT TO FOLLOW APPOINTMENT OF NEW EXTAFF COMMISSIONER.

8. WE WILL SEEK TO MAINTAIN POSTURE OF FORWARD MOVEMENT ON THE AID EVACUATION AND PLAN TO MOVE BOTH C&R AND PROGRAM OFFICE THIS WEEK. MEANWHILE, WE PROPOSE DRAFT NOTE PUTTING RENT-FREE ISSUE ON RECORD AS PROPOSED PARA 6, LAGOS 7385, WITH VIEW TO BRINGING IT UP WITH IYALLA OR HIS SUCCESSOR AS SOON AS NEW COMMISSIONER IS NAMED.

9. WOULD APPRECIATE ANY COMMENTS AND ADVICE AMBASSADOR EASUM OR DEPARTMENT MAY HAVE TO OFFER.

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